

***Hackelia hispida* var. *hispida* (Gray)**

rough stickseed

Boraginaceae (Borage Family)

**Status:** State Threatened

**Rank:** G4T?S1

**General Description:** A stout 16-28 in. (40 to 70 cm) tall, tap-rooted perennial with erect to ascending stems that are distinctly green with a purplish color on the lower half. The plants are uniformly covered with stiff hairs. The lower stem leaves are smaller and early deciduous. The flowers are cream colored or occasionally greenish and bell-shaped with a flaring rim. The petals have a set of small, hairless crests in the throat of the corolla. The oval nutlets have a series of intramarginal prickles that occur in an alternating pattern of long and short. The common name, "stickseed," is most likely due to these barbed prickles.

**Identification Tips:** *Hackelia hispida* var. *hispida* is most closely related to *Hackelia hispida* var. *disjuncta*. These two taxa can be distinguished by their leaves and range. The leaves of variety *hispida* have pubescence that is coarse and spreading with an elevated, pimple-like base. The lower stem leaves are ¼ in. (6 to 10 mm) wide and are not clasping. Variety *hispida* can be found in the vicinity of the Snake River Canyon. The leaves of variety *disjuncta* have pubescence that is fine, often nearly appressed, which lack elevated, pimple-like bases and is intermingled with coarser spreading hairs. The lower stem leaves are ½ to 1 in. (13 to 26 mm) wide and nearly clasping. Variety *disjuncta* can be found in the vicinity of the Grand Coulee.

**Phenology:** Flowering occurs from May through July.

**Range:** The species is a regional endemic that is reported in and around the Snake River Canyon in Idaho, Oregon, and southeastern Washington. The one verified population in Washington is in Asotin County.

**Habitat:** Cliffs, talus slopes, and locally disturbed sites at elevations between 1000-2500 ft (300-750 m).

**Ecology:** The species is very limited by its habitat and occurs only where rocky talus is found. Reportedly, the plant grows abundantly in localized disturbed habitats. However, some populations may have been extirpated by the damming of the Grand Coulee.

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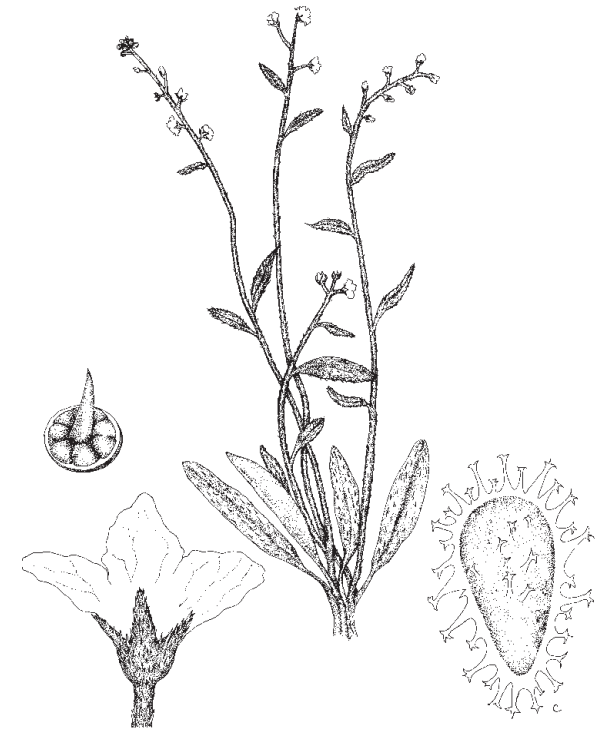
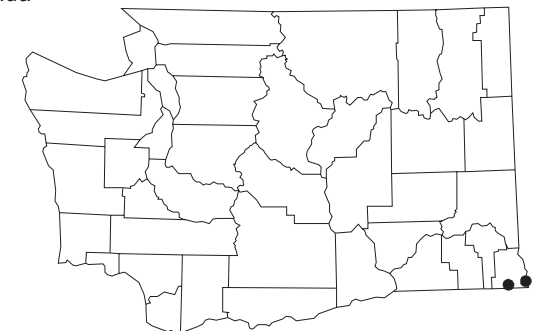


Illustration by Dinea Norrell

Known distribution of  
*Hackelia hispida* var. *hispida*  
in Washington



- Current (1980+)
- Historic (older than 1980)

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Photo by Florence Caplow



Photo by John Gamon

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**State Status Comments:** There are two known populations in Asotin County.

**Inventory Needs:** As the taxon is imperiled in Washington, additional inventory is needed.

**Threats and Management Concerns:** Heavy grazing may threaten the species, but its typical habitat of unstable talus slopes affords it some protection from grazing disturbance.

**References:**

Gentry, J.L. and R.L. Carr. 1976. A revision of the genus *Hackelia* (Boraginaceae) in North America, north of México. *Memoirs of the New York Botanical Garden* 26:121-227.

Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. 1964. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 4:Ericaceae through Campanulaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle. 510 pp.

Washington Natural Heritage Program. 1981. *An Illustrated Guide to the Endangered, Threatened and Sensitive Vascular Plants of Washington*. Washington State Department of Natural Resources. 328 pp.